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KENNEBEC



LOUISE HELEN COBURN



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KENNEBEC

AND OTHER POEMS

BY

LOUISE HELEN COBURN



BOSTON

SHERMAN, FRENCH & COMPANY

1916

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TO THE MEMORY OF
MY BROTHER

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KENNEBEC

Do you mind one evening, brother,
Of a far away July,
How we glided up the river,
Talking low to one another,
While our eyes were watching ever
Every hue upon the river,
Every tint upon the sky?

Spread upon the western sky
Sunset glow had left its splendor,
And the east each changing dye
Caught with emulation tender,
While with either vied the river.
Thus through every hue they ranged
East or west or river may,
Till the pink to purple changed
And the blue was turned to gray,
And we saw the brightness ever
Fading, dying in the river,
Waning, dying in the sky.

Then we saw the evening star
Floating from its haven far
In the shadows of the west;
Waxing fuller, brighter, clearer,
Coming nearer, ever nearer,
Smiling like a radiant guest
In the dull and darkening sky;
And the evening star below
In the tide began to glow

Like some luminous white jewel,
Holding fire within its breast
That consumes its heart as fuel,
And its track adown the river
In a broken line did quiver
With a constant fine unrest,—
While we glided up the river
In that long ago July.

Then as gloaming into night
Settled slowly, slowly turning
Sped we swiftly down the river;
And the moon came up to meet us,
In her beauty rose to greet us,
From the southward threw a burning
Bridge of gold across the river,
Elfish bridge whose beams did shiver
With a weird, fantastic light.

With the moon the southern bank
In its flight strange antics played;
Now behind the trees that ever
Fringe the margin of the river,
Hemlocks dun and birches hoary,
Hid the sinking moon her face,
Made each tiny twig appear
Like a mesh of silver lace
In the veil that screens the glory
Of the awful prophet's brow;
Now, as birch and hemlock sank,
Rising from the sinking bank,
Shone the moon a silver sphere;

And her double in the river
Now looked forth in beauty, now
Modest slipped within the shade.

So we floated down the river,
Past the stately elms dissembling
That they are not vain, but ever
Looking, leaning, watching only
For their faces in the river;
Past the poplar grove a-trembling
With the kisses of the moon; —
Floated down until the lonely
Pine upon the point we rounded,
And the rapids nearer sounded,
Till the misty bank grew clearer,
And the lights of home came nearer,
Nearer, clearer, all too soon.

Under sun or star or moon,
Dusk of eve or glow of noon;
When the swallow dips his wing
In the glassy wave that renders
Tint for tint the hues of spring;
When the summer-time its splendors
Views repeated in the river,
Field and hillside, crag and tree,
Blended, brightened, yet the same;
Or when autumn colors mellow,
Maple's red and poplar's yellow,
Touch its liquid depths with flame; —
Beautiful, my brother, ever
Is our shining, winding river,
Onward flowing to the sea.

In the fastness of the north,
Silently it issues forth
From the bosom of the lake,
From the stillness of the woods
And the shadow of the hills;
Wends its winding journey down,
Fed by rippling forest rills
Creeping through the solitudes;
Winds its way by tangled brake,
Sunny slope and shaded dale,
Farms whose grateful harvests smile,
Whirring mill and busy town;
Narrows in the deep defile,
Broadens on the intervale,
Whispers to the grassy shore,
Loudens with the rapids' roar;—
Till at last with lingering motion
Deep and broad it meets the ocean,
River merges into ocean,
Bearing on its tranquil bosom
Snowy-petaled ships that blossom
Into beauty on the sea.—
O my brother, fairest ever
Of all rivers is this river,
Loveliest to you and me,
From its cradle in the lake
To its grave within the sea!

A SONG TO MAINE

A SONG to Maine we sing who stand
On the sunrise outpost of the land,
For we love our State with a love as great
 As her forests wide and grand.
Earliest flees the night in Maine;
Earliest dawns the light in Maine;
At the gate of the East, as morning's priest,
 Vigil forever keeps Maine.

The pines of Katahdin call to the sea,
And the waves make answer faithfully;
Freedom and rest they promise our guest,
 And the healing of turf and tree.
Fair are the rivers and rills of Maine;
Kind are the woods and the hills of Maine,
And the crystal lakes and the surge that breaks
 On the rock-bound shores of Maine.

Granite and ice are our ore from the mine;
Rosy-cheeked apples our fruit of the vine;
We envy no wealth but we drink to the health
 Of the world in the oldest wine.
Sparkling clear cold water of Maine —
To grateful son and daughter of Maine
The sweetest draught that was ever quaffed
 Is the pure cold water of Maine.

As flowers in fragrant gardens, so
In modest homes fair children grow,

Reared in the love of the Father above
For the blessing of earth below.
Wealthy in forest and stream is Maine,
Rich in the hope of her dream is Maine,—
But dearest far of her treasures are
The hearts and the homes of Maine.

Woodsmen and farmers and fishers are we,
We follow the trail and the plow and the sea;
But we turn from all at our country's call
To follow the flag of the free.
Loyal and brave and true is Maine;
Ready to dare and to do is Maine;
In the van of the fight for the cause that is right
Are ever the sons of Maine.

We have drained our homes at the world's demand,
Our youth have poured to the farthest strand;
We have given our best to the thirsty West,—
Our life to the life of the land.
Builders of states are the men from Maine;
Makers of cities the men from Maine;
On the frontier's walls, in the nation's halls,
First are the men from Maine.

The Pine Tree State — may she lead the way
Through twilight shades to a brighter day!
With God as guide, whate'er betide,
Maine leads — may she lead away!
Fair are the rivers and rills of Maine,
Kind are the woods and the hills of Maine,—
So we'll sing as long as we breathe our song
To the dear old State of Maine.

MAINE'S JEWELS

WHEN Maine salutes the opening spring,
Bright hues awake like birds in the nest,
A glint of sky in the bluebird's wing,
A flash of sun on the oriole's breast.
Young green of the budding year is blent
With the willow's gold and the apple's rose,
And to blossom and bud and bird is lent
Such light as the opal's bosom shows —
An opal is spring in Maine.

Hotly, in Maine's brief summer-time,
The sweet air swims over meadows lush,
And billows of hurrying verdure climb
Valleys where crystal rivers rush.
Blue is the sky and black by turns,
When lightning leaps from the clouds uphurled;
And after noise green silence burns
With dazzle of sun on a wet green world —
An emerald is summer in Maine.

When autumn touches the hills of Maine,
Then nature mixes a palette bold,
With chrome and madder her woods to stain,
To paint her rivers vermilion and gold.
There are purple and umber and ochre to choose,
With silver of hoar-frost and yellow of sheaf,
A gamut of colors, a chorus of hues,
And the key is a crimson maple leaf —
A ruby is autumn in Maine.

When arctic winter comes to Maine,
From the gates of morning the storm-winds blow,
And drape each scar and seam and stain
With a radiant robe of the driven snow.
Life flies to cover before the cold,
Heat is discrowned in the kingdom of light;
And flush of dawn and noonday gold
Are frozen fires in a world of white —
A diamond is winter in Maine.

Maine wears a regal diadem,
With jewels set of the seasons four,
And would not miss from her crown one gem
For the palm and the vine of a softer shore;
And would not a lesser octave sing
For the tune and the croon of a languid land
Which dreads not winter nor dreams of spring,
By the breath of endless summer fanned —
Queen of the year is Maine.

GRANDMOTHER'S GRANDMOTHER

GRANDMOTHER's grandmother, through the woods
Moose and red man were wont to roam,
Brought her babes and her household goods
To make in the wilderness a home.

The Kennebec rippled beside her door,
Or laid a crystal roadway there;
The shadow of pines on her cabin floor
Took shape of Indian and bear.

No woman for feminine service made,
Shut from the work of the world was she; —
Home was a factory, life a trade,
And Mother a captain of industry.

She was tailor, milliner, mantua-maker,
Upholsterer, weaver of carpet and rug,
Chandler, soapmaker, dairy-maid, baker,
Knitter of hose and mittens snug.

Weaver of wool for blanket and gown,
Weaver of linen for bed and table,
Dyer of crimson and purple and brown,
Spinner and broiderer as she was able.

Twenty trades were hers to command,
A dozen professions were hers to fill;
Doctor and dentist always at hand,
Trained nurse and kindergartner at will.

Grandmother's grandmother's sons were bold,
Steady of arm and keen of eye,
Skilled to fell the white pine old,
Taught to fear God and to scorn a lie.

Grandmother's grandmother's girls were fair,
Patient to take up her task again,
Swift to labor and strong to bear,
Makers of homes and mothers of men.

Peacefully by the river side
Grandmother's grandmother lies at rest;
The tall pines whisper to the tide,
And drop their needles upon her breast.

Where cities welcome or deserts wait,
Or prairies their yellow bounty tell,—
Where the new West looks through the Golden Gate,
Grandmother's grandmother's children dwell.

Where commerce wheels his dizzy round,
Where glitters the gold in mountain mine,
Where orange orchards smile, are found
The sons and daughters of her line.

Their names are writ on the honor roll
Of every battle for freedom and right;
Their feet have been swift in the race whose goal
Is the wider look from the fairer height.

The torch of truth and the flag of the free
They have borne from ocean tide to tide;
They have planted homes from sea to sea,
Whose fruitage ripe is the nation's pride.

Poorer the world were, you may know,—
Poorer and leaner and sadder the land,—
Had grandmother's grandmother, long ago,
To lover and husband denied her hand.

VALUES

THE artist at his easel dreams,
And, like a butterfly, flutters to birth
His vision of the loveliness of earth,
Bodied in color, feathered in dusks and gleams;
That lives again which never lived before;

What hath no being
Is imaged for our seeing,
And Beauty enters by another door.
The painter's hand his eye obeys;
His eye discerns, compares and weighs
The values just, of balanced sheen and shade,
That beat the tuneful measures of his trade.

In Venice's splendid prime so Titian wrought,
Wove out of shadow and sun his thought;
And pilgrims from a colder land,
Who with glad eyes before the Assumption stand,
Confess the master's brush has followed true
The invisible latitudes of hue,
Circled the day from dawn to even,
And climbed a color stair from earth to heaven.

Art is of life a type and part,
And life its values hath, as art.
Petty and vast are met
In fair equation for our solving set.
The Artist's hand that limned the plan
Of frost and flame hath made,
Of rhythmic light and shade,
The chiaroscuro of the life of man.

The song is dearer than the bird,
It higher soars on swifter wings;
More potent than the breath the word,
And thoughts are regnant over things;
Fadeth the body of life, the spirit
The life of Heaven's life shall inherit.

Forgotten by the centuries, in that green
Corner of England where the mountains lean
To listen to the whisper of the sea,
What once was Furness Abbey waits;
Hushed are the matins in its gates,
Where thrush and blackbird chant their litany.
Verdant the pavement, azure springs the vault;
The mullioned window frames the sky;
Cornice and architrave at fault
In mute contrition sundered lie;
And nought upon the headless column rests,
And nought is girded by the shattered wall;
In the rift of the cloven arch the sparrow nests,
And ivy hangs a tracery over all.
A fragment, but alive; a broken bit
Of a bygone age that age has spared to kill,
It keeps the trick of the artist, vital still
With the creative thought that fashioned it.
For dreams endure, though systems pass away,
And beauty lives while stones decay.

Beauty from beauty differs far
As height from height, as star from star.
There is life's vesture of the real,

There is life's crown of the ideal.
A chosen day upon a chosen spot
In the white Alps I stood, aware
Of glacier, slope and summit circling fair —
Yet missed I knew not what.
Flocks of bright peaks like sheep at pasture lay,
Letting the sunlight in their fleeces play.
Too perfect! Only in Heaven shall we
Be satisfied with what we see.
What nowhere fails will always fail;
Something we crave behind the veil,
And would not have all edges lit,
Nor nature's runes too plainly writ.
Lo! as I looked, a mist unseen
Stirred not, but was not, and between
The hills and heaven, remote, alone,
As neither sky nor mountain, shone
The haloed brow of Monte Rosa, white
With gathered glory of the upper light.
A moment, and the invisible mist
From my rapt gaze has reft
The spectral summit, glory-kissed,—
Only the smiling lesser peaks are left.
So, on the heights of life, the haze
That shrouds unguessed our meaner days
Lifts, and a glimpse of higher height
Is granted to our happy sight.
The vision fades,— the knowledge stays,
The secret joy of unilluminated days.

If beauty is life's flower of youth,
Thought is the leafage of its prime;

Fact is the ladder up to truth;
Truth is the vital spark of time.
Great thoughts in which the heart of history lies
Are strung like pearls upon the centuries.

'Twas Moses' thought and God's that, like a hand,
Pointed the host of Israel to the land
Of hope and promise; 'twas the thought of Paul
That spoke to Luther like a bugle call
On Pilate's knee-worn stair; and Luther's thought
An era ended and an era brought.

'Twas a boy's dream upon the crescent shore,
Where Genoa bids the wandering billows rest,
That led Columbus the far spaces o'er
Into the waiting haven of the west.

'Twas an idea too big for England drove
The venturous pilgrims o'er the hostile sea;
And the high thought of Washington was wove
Into the starry banner of the free.

A king is thought, and like a king imparts
Even to his mantle majesty;
And of the works of man is nought
That brain has curiously devised,
Or hand has fashioned cunningly,
So proud, so rich, no heritage so fair,
No art so kingly as the art of arts,
Language, the robe and tool of thought.
Earth's keenest weapon is a word,
And weightier Homer's verse than Hector's sword.

Greater than God's world is his thought
That is its heart. Fairest his word
Of all his works, that made them fair,
Its echoes in their beauty caught.
That word primordial darkness heard,
And light out of the darkness drew,
And order out of chaos grew,—
That name the Son of God hath deigned to wear.

As fades the flower of grass,
What hath been framed shall pass;
Like a deserted hearth,
Ashes for fire the sun shall render; earth
Her pace shall slacken, held by the retarding tides,—
The thought of God is sure, his word abides.

So may we mount on spirit wings
Above the ebb and flood of things,
And finding what in part we sought
Requickened in the eternal whole,
May learn the primacy of thought,
And own the sovereignty of soul.

Sweet perfume in that garden grows
Of lily and asphodel and rose,
Drought cannot kill nor wither death;
And heavenly music sings
In that thin air above
The hurt breast and the broken wings,—
The fadeless flowers are hope and faith,
The deathless birds are peace and joy and love.

THE JUNGFRAU FROM BERNE

Lo ! like a phantom of dawn, cloud-white, cloud-frail,
cloud-high,

Faintly out of the mist she floats, mist-maid of the
sky.

Long have I known her in vision, and loved with the
love of faith —

She answers my dream by a dream, and mocks my
desire with a wraith.

AFTERGLOW ON THE JUNGFRAU

THE sun, whose going left but now
A shadow on his sweetheart's brow,
Relenting, back a love-kiss throws,
And straight the lily maid turns rose.

COME HOME

Soft breezes blow,
Green waters flow;
Too long you roam,
Come home, come home!

Day follows night
In sure swift flight;
O'er flying foam,
Swift boat, come home!

Swift boat, trace back
Your silver track;
O'er surge and foam
Bear true hearts home!

The long, long way
Of coursing day,
Through fog and foam
Bring glad hearts home!

Soft breezes blow,
Green waters flow;
No longer roam,
Dear hearts, come home!

GREAT AND SMALL

THE firebird's aglow on the elm,
The frog glimmers green in the pool;
Athwart the mackerel school
The fisherman swerves his helm.

The barnacle shackles the oak,
The dodder throttles the flax;
The honey-bee shapes her wax
With delicate, dexterous stroke.

The comet steers for the sun,
The sun heeds the Pleiad afar,
The nebula whirls to a star,
The stars their courses run.

In a raindrop's crystal ball
Armies with armies close;
An emerald forest grows
On the wet and moldering wall.

I soar on the wings of my thought
To immensities past compute;
Down the ladder of the minute
I reach for what God has wrought.

O Thou, who balanced the spheres,
Who modeled the buttercup,
Whose power draws the seedling up
Till the giant pine appears,

All creatures, great and small,
All things, minute and vast,
In thy fashioning hand thou hast,
Thou keepst and ledest all.

LIFE CALLS TO LIFE

LIFE calls to life in the shadow
Betwixt the dark and the morn;
Life's agony is voiced by a cry,
And a little child is born.

Another body for anguish,
For toil and vigil and strain;
Another soul to learn the dole
Of the world's immortal pain.

But when earth wakes with morning,
With stir of field and of mart,
One mother keeps, while her infant sleeps,
Life's Christmas in her heart.

Though the world be spent with sorrow,
Pain-racked and terror-driven,
Hope springs on earth with each new birth,
And love to love is given.

BABY FINGERS

WEE pink fingers that clasp and cling,
My heart like my finger you enring
As tendrils circle a trellis string.

Links of love that nothing can break,
Tightly our hearts you bind, and make
The old earth new for a baby's sake.

Tender fingers that feel and grope
In an unknown world for space and scope,
Are you reaching for love and life and hope?

The future waits — who can understand?
The hope of earth and the life of the land
Lie in the palm of a rose-leaf hand.

We, while the future waits its king,
Kisses and comfort and worship bring
To the baby fingers that twine and cling.

HOPE

LIKE a plant frost-bound
That longs for the spring,
My heart underground
Buds for blossoming.

Hope sings to my heart,—
After winter comes spring,
Gold and green to bring,
Perfume and song and wing.

Like a grub in the earth,
Digging through the night,
My heart waits for birth
Into beauty and light.

Hope sings to my heart,—
After night comes light,
After blindness sight,
After the depth the height.

Like a bird wind-driven
O'er the ocean, my heart
Hath with salt waves striven,
Hath in life had part.

To my heart sings hope,—
After storm comes calm,
After the wound the balm,
After the strife the palm.

LEAGUE ON LEAGUE THE MOIST WHITE SPACES

LEAGUE on league the moist white spaces
Spread tonight 'twixt me and thee;
Dreary distance veils our faces,
Hides the love we may not see.

Love the veil that blinds her rendeth,
Gazing outward far and free;
Thought her flying feelers sendeth
Through the ether unto thee.

Love the wintry world disguises,
Bridging space from me to thee;
Prayer outreaches and uprises,
Linking Heaven and thee and me.

As the mystic wave the message
Bears of peril on the sea,—
As, obeying nature's presage,
Speeds to hive the laden bee,—

So my loving thought goes leaping
Through the distance swift and free,
Tryst with thine divinely keeping,
And I sleep to dream of thee.

EAST AND WEST

WHEN first Columbus sailed across the seas,
An old world seeking, but to find a new,
Watching at bow he deemed the western breeze
Sweet in his face from orient gardens blew.

The world's far west to eastward slipped astern;
Westward he passed, of ancient east in quest;
Soon to a waiting east he should return
The royal gift of a discovered west.

So was the west made east, the east made west,
The severing seas linked fast the sundered lands;
Earth's myriad rushing life yet westward pressed,
Till newest west with oldest east clasped hands.

PROMISE

A CROCUS snow-girdled, a violet wind-driven,—
Then burgeons and blossoms the beauty of May.
A trill in the darkness, a quaver faint-given,—
Then join in full chorus the song-birds of day.

The calyx that opens to April's first wooing
The secret of summer embosomed reveals,
And the singer whose carol is darkness' undoing
The promise of morning with ecstasy feels.

FRAILTY

I KNOW a flower with azure wings,
That smiles at sun and smiles at shade,
While every breeze sweet perfume brings
And passes, sweeter made.

I know a happy heart that stays
Content with folded wings to bide
Through fragrant, lingering summer days
Another heart beside.

Ah me! when chill succeedeth sun,
When sighs the breeze and weeps the sky,
What wilt thou do when June is done,
Frail flower, but fade and die?

Frail heart, whose tendrils clasp and twine,
When fails the heart for whose dear sake
June zephyrs fan, June roses shine,
What canst thou do but break?

SUNSET AND MIDNIGHT

VIOLET and gold, the buds unfold
In the garden of the West;
And a splendid star is poised afar,
Like a bird above its nest.
O glory, stay! O night, delay!
Color and joy are best!
But the splendor goes, and the shadows close,
Nor heed my heart's behest.

The shadows cover the mountains over,
And darkness wraps the land;
Midnight enfolds, as a mother holds,
The weary of heart and hand.
Thy gift is best, O bringer of rest!
O helper and healer, stay!
Nor haste nor wait, at morning's gate,
The feet of the new day.

ATTEAN

THE twisted pines of Attean
Old agonies express;
The poplars swing their copper curls
With a glint in every tress;
The birches' gilded finger-tips
The cool of the lake caress.

The sun goes down on Attean,
But tosses when he flies
A shower of gems to be scrambled for
As they tumble down the skies,
An island, cloud, and agile wave
Do combat for the prize.

The velvet mountain darkens
Against the lustrous west,
Like a purple plum with the bloom on
In a peach and apricot nest,—
And peach and plum and apricot
Refresh the thirsty guest.

The moon comes up on Attean,
Like a lady in a dream,
And pours from her silver pitcher
The sliding, shining cream,
That brims the goblet of the lake
With its lambent, bubbling stream.

Then all is still on Attean,
Under the smile of the moon,

Save the low laugh of the ripple,
And the poplars' tender croon,
And shrill and sweet in the distance
The wild cry of the loon.

THE SUNSET SKY

THE sunset sky that eve was bright
With flooding tides of changeful light;
 Like white fires in the opal's breast,
 They ebb'd, and flow'd, and found no rest,
But throbb'd with splendors infinite.

We stood together on the height,
And quier'd still with new delight
 Which new tint touch'd with glory best
 The sunset sky.

Then, as we look'd, the brooding night
From the far shadowy East took flight,
 Came like a swift bird to her nest,
 Cover'd the palpitating West
With purple wings that hid from sight
 The sunset sky.

A FOUR-LEAFED CLOVER

A FOUR-LEAFED clover? Oh, despair!
For never yet could I discover
In the soft grasses anywhere
 A four-leafed clover.

Cruel to bid a pleading lover
Work out the answer to his prayer
By such a task! Will nothing move her?

A quick thought trembled on the air;
I caught and turned her fingers over,
And found — ah, joy! close hidden there
 A four-leafed clover.

APRIL

APRIL smiles amid her tears,
 Harking to the foot of May.
Autumn blights and winter sears;
April smiles amid her tears;
Budding hope succeedeth fears;
 After night-time springeth day;
April smiles amid her tears,
 Harking to the foot of May.

THE IDEAL

THE artist said:—"My youth is fled,
But the hope of youth is mine;
My spirit's best, still unexpressed,
Leads like a star divine.

"Beauty and truth hear the vows of youth
In life's peristyle, the Real;
But shrined apart in her Naos, my heart
Owns its goddess—the Ideal.

"What eyes can see of sky or tree
Is the veil that hides her face;
Its edge shows bright to the acolyte
Who waits in the holy place.

"In the breath of dawn she sighs and is gone;
She creeps with the twilight near;
In the moment's flame of vision, her name
She whispers in my ear.

"My fingers bold would pluck and hold
The perfume wafted by;
My falcon thought has climbed and caught
The song-bird of the sky.

"But for odor grasped, in the hand unclasped
Are wilted petals found;
And the singer caught on the wing is nought
But a dead bird on the ground.

“ Not the palm but the strife is the prize of life,—
Not the finish but the start;
And to follow fast a thought so vast
That to miss is to win — is Art.

“ There is no rest in the artist's quest,
No bourn to his pilgrimage;
The vision smiled on the dreaming child,
It quickens the pulse of age.

“ My head is gray with the ebbing day,
But I follow, follow still
Where the mists descend to the rainbow's end,
Just over the eastern hill.”

L'ANGELUS

THEY stand with shadowed faces,
 Against the evening glow,
Tired hands a moment quiet,
 And reverent heads bowed low.

The long brown ground out-stretches;
 The long night shadows fall;
But the light of an autumn sunset
 Throws a glory over all.

And hark! from the golden distance,
 The vesper hour to tell,
Comes borne on the western zephyrs
 The note of a sweet-voiced bell.

Beautiful in the gloaming
 Are the maiden and the youth;
Hers is the heart of worship,—
 His is the soul of truth.

Forgotten the long day's labor,—
 Its weary burden of care,—
Their souls have mounted to Heaven
 On the angel wings of prayer.

Only two old-world peasants,
 Brown-handed children of toil,
Who wrest with each day's anguish
 Their life from the niggard soil!

Only a picture of peasants,
On the sunset-lighted sod,
With faces bowed in the gloaming,
And hearts up-raised to God!

But the hand of the poet-painter
Has caught and fixed them there,
To be for a generation
The symbol and type of prayer.

THE SECRET OF COLOR

*Nature used color before painters did;
The trick of her art is still a secret hid.*

Rose of an Alpine dawn,
Blue of Bermuda seas,
Gold on Florida trees,
Green in an English lawn,—
From the beginning Nature knew
The use and the place of every hue.

Yellow the goldfinch swings;
Scarlet the tanager's dressed;
Fire lights the oriole's breast,
Azure the bluebird's wings.
Glory of color and joy of song
Were gifts of God to the feathered throng.

Madder tinges the rose,
Carmine the tulip's veins;
Purple the pansy stains;
Chrome in the daffodil glows.
A hundred tints of a hundred flowers
Gladden the garden in summer hours.

Jewels like clouds are bright
With the hues of Iris at play;
Beauty follows the day
In harmonies of light.

God might have made the earth all gray,
Instead gave color, light, and day.

*Nature knew color before artists did,—
The key of her palette stays a mystery hid.*

A SONG

THROUGH a meadow
Where the shadow
Lieth soft, a streamlet floweth,
Floweth, goeth,
With a tender motion, slowly,
On its lowly
Bed among the swaying rushes,
While it hushes
Every ripple of its breast
Into rest;—
As the streamlet loves the meadow,
Love I thee!

Low a willow bends above it,
Leans to love it,
Giving of her golden treasure
Lavish measure,
Floating down in gleaming shower,
As to Danaë came Jove, her
Kingly lover,
With a yellow rain of power,
In a self-renouncing dream;—
As the willow loves the stream,
Love I thee!

To the willow,
Ere the billow
Of his rushing tide of splendor
Drives the shadow
Of the dusk from off the meadow,

Gives the sun his greeting tender;
Layeth on her yellow tresses
 His caresses
 When he leaves her
To the darkness that receives her; —
First he greets her, latest leaves her; —
As the sunshine loves the willow,
 Love I thee!

SAPPHO

WHEN Sappho touched her Grecian lyre
And sang an ode to Lesbos' daughters,
There ran a spark of quickening fire
Across the wheeling azure waters.

A note so sweet had never met
The bending sentient empyrean;
A flame so splendid never yet
Lit the glad waves of the Ægean.

Snow-templed Sunium caught the strain,
And sunny Hellas leaned to listen,
And all the circling isles were fain
With answering light to gleam and glisten.

Æolian maids at Sappho's feet
Bright tribute laid of bloom and beauty,
And bards of Hellas vied to greet
The queen of song with loyal duty.

Doubting to envy or rejoice,
Phœbus his favorite daughter singled,
For never in his Delphic voice
Were God and mortal so commingled.

Under the lilies Sappho lies,
But age to age her fame rehearses,
And lingers down the centuries
The echo of her lovely verses.

Never again shall poesy
Link with such flame divine and human
Until again the singer be
A Greek, a poet, and a woman.

ARIEL

Who calleth, calleth,
Sweet as glancing water falleth,
Clear as sings a crystal bell?
'Tis Ariel!

Come! ah, come!
To Ariel's Elysian home!
Rare odors linger on the breeze;
Bright bird-wings flutter mid the trees;
The sunlight falls aslant the plain;
The trailing sweetbriar scents the lane;
The streamlet murmurs; on the hill
Blossoms the laughing daffodil.
'Tis Beauty's haunt! 'Tis Ariel's home!
Come! ah, come!

Ariel! Ariel!
Thy call to hearken were it well?
Along Life's dust-worn track we go,
Our way is toilsome, long and slow;
We hasten! Were it well to linger,
Led by thy ruddy, beckoning finger,
In glens where pleasant flowers rejoice?
Thou callest, callest, and thy voice
Is passing sweet. Ah, were it well,
Ariel?

WALTHER VON DER VOGELWEIDE

WALTHER, the minnesinger,
Beyond all tell of words
Loved and was loved by Nature
And her little ones, the birds.

For Nature, the faithful-hearted,
Is ever a bit of a prude,
She will not for poet's uses
Or artist's vaunt be wooed.

She is coy to such as seek her
For name or fashion or pelf,
But she gives her heart to the lover
Who loves her for herself.

So, because Walther loved her
With a pure heart, heartily,
She made him her knight and minstrel,
True poet of birds to be.

Then every bird of the moorland
And every bird of the grove
Gave a note of its song to the poet,
As a pledge of true bird-love.

The linnet taught him the carol
That chimes with the rivulet's run;
The sky-lark the cry ecstatic
He lifts to the midday sun.

The throstle gave him the love-note
He sings to his mate in May;
And the chaffinch the lyric of gladness
That heralds the break of day.

The nightingale lent him the rapture
That thrills in his swelling breast,
And the swallow the tune she murmurs
To the birdlings in her nest.

So all the delight of summer,
And all the music of May,
The little birds taught their minstrel
To mix in his roundelay.

He sang of youth like May-time,
And of love divinely strong,
And he drew the hearts of the people
By the power of love and song.

His was the sweetest singing
That the sad world had heard,
For it came from the heart of the spring-time,
Like the carol of a bird.

Walther, the minnesinger,
With hands calm folded lay,
And a great gray stone above him
Waited the judgment day.

Upon his grave each noontide,
By his will and last behest,

In the hollows of his grave-stone
Was spread for the birds a feast.

And with flutter of wing they hurried
From hill and meadow and wood,
On the grave of the poet who loved them
To gather their daily food.

The tide of life sweeps onward,
Wave followed by higher wave;
The feast of the birds no longer
Is spread on the minstrel's grave.

But sweet is still bird-singing,
And sweet are poet's words,—
The birds love still the poet,
And the poet loves the birds.

THE CROWS AT ARLINGTON

FROM the shore of the broad Potomac,
Against the southern skies,
The wooded heights of Arlington
With slow ascension rise.

At its foot the river lingers
In its rapid journey by,
And beyond, the dome of the Capitol
Keeps watch between earth and sky.

Where the winding paths of Arlington
By the shade of its groves are crossed,
Nightly the crows assemble,
A vast, unnumbered host.

They deepen the dusk of night-fall,
They shadow the evening breeze,
They settle down like the darkness
Into the branching trees.

When the earliest bird of morning
His matin carol sings,
They rise from their bosky coverts,
And poise on their glossy wings;

And across the wide Potomac,
And past the snowy dome,
O'er the fertile fields of Maryland
The sable thousands roam.

But when sunset gilds the tree-tops
With the smile of closing day,
To the sheltering groves of Arlington
They wing their homeward way.

Still are the woods of Arlington;
There broods a nameless hush
Over its solemn avenues,
Where the winds forbear to rush.

Green are the fields of Arlington;
The long grass gently waves,
When the south wind sighs above it,
On twenty thousand graves.

Light lie the snows of winter,
Soft fall the summer rains
O'er the dead who died for liberty
On the fair Virginia plains.

The children strew spring flowers
On the soldier's grass-grown bed,
And the black-winged birds keep nightly guard
O'er the city of the dead.

THE MOCKINGBIRD

A MOCKINGBIRD on an orange bough
Of waking morn was ware;
The fragrance of the orange bloom
Was wafted on the air;
And scent of blossom and song of bird
Were sweet beyond compare.

The singer sang his heart out
To meet the heart of day;
The rapture of his lyric note
Held waiting breath in sway;
One heard, and a sombre thought took wing,
And a shadow sped away.

His matin carol ended,
Afar the singer flew;
And what sweet comfort from the tune
Had dropped like dropping dew,
Only God who taught the mockingbird
And one that listened knew.

'TIS ALL IN THE POINT OF VIEW

UNDER a spreading basswood leaf
A young fly, fluttering, hung;
Dizzily up, by circles brief,
And giddily down he swung.

On the topmost bough of the basswood tree
A bobolink swayed and sang;
Into clear sky-deeps, floating free,
His jubilant flute-notes rang.

“I am glad,” sang he, “that the sky is blue;
I am glad that the world is wide;
And higher than ever bobolink flew
Heaven’s unwinged spaces bide.”

“Friend bobolink,” buzzed the giddy fly,
“’Tis nonsense that you sing;
The sky is so low that if I try
I can touch it with my wing.

“The world is green to its farthest rim
With the greenness of the sky,
And I hope to reach its outmost limb.
With my buzzing ere I die.”

“Friend fly,” cried the bobolink, “I’ll agree,
With the basswood leaf between,
Your world is as wide as the basswood tree,
And your sky is near and green.

“ But to my gaze Heaven’s arches raise
Unmeasured heights of blue,
And I lift my song in rejoicing praise,—
’Tis all in the point of view.”

WITH THE BIRDS

SWEETLY at dawn the sparrow sings
His rapture for the gift of wings;
I wake to join the sparrow's lay,
And thank the Giver for the day.

And sweetly in the twilight still
His vespers chants the whippoorwill;
I hear, and breathe from grateful breast
A prayer to Him who giveth rest.

So daily with the birds I raise
My evening prayer and morning praise,
For, sun or shadow, joy or rest,
The gift God giveth is the best.

SEA-GULLS

WHEN the sun on a silver sea
Makes the ripples laugh with glee,
And tender breezes play
With the long surf's jeweled spray;

From where dim islands sleep
On the bosom of the deep,
From the meeting of wave and sky,
The white gulls fly.

Now sunward dark as night,
And now toward the shadow bright,
They circle, and wheel, and rise
To the heart of the azure skies.

With upward curve and swing,
And downward sweep of wing,
They trace on the ether plain
The waves of the wind-swept main.

The white sails fleck the sea,
Like a daisy-studded lea;
The white wings dot the air,
As the sea were mirrored there.

When a darkening veil of clouds
The face of ocean shrouds;
When shrieks the angry blast,
And the fog is driving fast;

When faintly looms afar
A boat with a naked spar; —
With trailing wings and low
The white gulls go.

Like phantoms, huge and dim,
The hurrying waves they skim,
And dip each glossy breast
In the foaming breaker's crest.

On the edge of an ocean rock,
Where the seas with surge and shock
Beat forever in mad unrest,
The white gulls nest.

When the blind night mist spreads wide,
With the roar of the rising tide,
The young ones listen and peer
For the rushing of white wings near.

Wherever are mist and foam,
Here is the sea-gull's home;
The bound of the venturous tide
His wandering wing has tried.

Offspring of cloud and wave,
A dual bliss ye have,
With a double freedom free,
Of the sky and of the sea!

ON THE SHORE

Two lovers stood on the shore,
And watched the bright waves dance;
The sea with blue of the sky was blue,
And the lovers' eyes saw heaven's own hue,
Each in the other's glance.
The waves made laughter in their ears,
And they saw the shining of happy years
In the smile of the sea.

A widow stood on the shore;
The gray sea sobbed and sighed;
Darkly it lay under darkling sky,
Its moan was deep, and its wail rose high
With the ebb-turn of the tide;
And the widow heard the anguish of life,
The pang of its loss, and the throe of its strife,
In the moan of the sea.

An artist stood on the shore;
The sea stretched level and pale,
With a pearl-tipped crest, and an opal sheen
In the curve of the ripple that turned between,
And the gleam of a silver sail;
And the artist saw, as a vision faint,
The light of a picture he might paint,
In the light of the sea.

A poet stood on the shore;
The spray on his cheek fell wet;

White was the foam that edged the waves,
And loud the voice through the ocean caves
 Of surges shoreward set;
And the poet heard with kindling eyes
The rhythm of unsung melodies
 In the song of the sea.

Death has severed the lovers twain,
 But the waves on other lovers smile;
The years have brought their balm to pain,
 The ocean moans as moaned erewhile.
The lovely picture is still unlimned,
 But the light that shone meets other eyes;
The magic numbers are yet unhymned,—
 The surge repeateth its melodies.
Other the feet upon the shore—
The sea abideth evermore.

NO MORE SEA

SITTING beside the ocean, looking on

Its broad expanse of watery waste, now lit
Into full glory by the setting sun,

I read new meaning in the line once writ
By him who saw the holy vision, John,
“And there was no more sea.”

Symbol of grief! The stricken heart always

Has found communion with its mournful swell,
The while its solemn surges for a day

Make happy faces sad. 'Tis written well
That when all tears by God are wiped away
There shall be no more sea.

Symbol of mystery! It lies alone,

Its secrets yet unread by eager eye,
Its hills unleveled, and its fields unsown;

But when there is an end of mystery,
And we shall know even as we are known,
There shall be no more sea.

Type of eternity! Its hither shore

Looks on no bounding wall; the eye in vain
To seek a limit roams its reaches o'er;

But when the things eternal we shall gain,
Their earthly symbol we shall need no more,—
There shall be no more sea.

Ah, summer sea! I cannot bear to leave

Thy passion and thy wonder and thy vast

Hint of a vaster somewhat; but when eve
Shall break into eternal morn at last,
I know I shall not miss thy voice, nor grieve
That there is no more sea.

ON THE HEIGHT

OUR feet at last have gained the mountain height,
Rest on its lichened soil,
And lo! the world is spread beneath our sight,
The guerdon of our toil.

We feel the peace and stillness of the place
Creep over heart and brain,
As the calm summer in its soft embrace
Has wrapt the tranquil plain.

Adown the mountain side descend the woods,
Hemlock and beech and pine,
Across whose dark and tangled solitudes
The slanting sunbeams shine.

Sinking and swelling like the ebbing sea
The nearer distance lies,
While toward the far horizon, rolling free,
Hills above hills arise.

White, fleecy clouds in the blue ether rest,
Or with faint motion float,
Shadowed on hills, and mirrored in the breast
Of lakes near and remote.

From nestling hamlets, by whose clustered fires
Pale, circling mists are given,
The pointed fingers of a hundred spires
Direct our eyes to heaven.

Each object unto each its tint has lent;
No outline stands alone,
But each is softened, and all discords blent
In true harmonious tone.

Our worrying cares, like a forgotten dream,
Have slipped so far away,
The mountain blossoms at our feet do seem
Of more account than they.

White, star-like flowers, unnoticed, by the still
Cool rocks they live and die,
And without care or question so fulfil
Their simple destiny.

The throbbing pulses of the fevered earth,
Its passion and its pain,
Dimmed by the purple distance, seem less worth
Than the wood-bird's refrain.

'Tis well sometimes to climb to such a spot,
And from our broadened view
To learn the world is wider than we thought,
And smaller than we knew.

The world is very wide; we cannot bear
Even to guess its pain;
If we could know its grief, its wrong, its care,
We scarce could breathe again.

We have but, like the mountain flowers, to live
Our simple lives alone,
And trustfully unto our Father give
The charge over his own.

The world is very small; its passions cease,
 Its throbbing pulses die,
Its woes are silent in the eternal peace
 Of God's infinity.

THE OPTIMIST

“ God’s Good,” I said, “ spoke at creation’s morn
Was a red rosebud laid on Earth’s young breast,
Which the long day will, spite of worm and thorn,
Uncurl to Better, open wide to Best.”

FLOWERS OF MAY

WHAT, into the woods, my darling, while Winter's
breath is chill?
While the north wind and the whirling snow hold
revel on the hill?
Do you think the fleeting Summer may for you have
left behind
Some treasure hid too tenderly for snow and ice to
find?
And never yet in all the wood could bud or blossom
hide,
Under leaf or moss or waving fern that shades the
streamlet's side,
So deeply or so darkly that its dim and sheltered
nook
Could escape your tireless feet, my dear, or evade
your loving look.
But today the wintry gale is moaning through the
branches bare;
The patient feet and eager eyes could find no flowers
there,
When the biting wind was braved and the billowy
drifts were crossed,
Nothing but buds of ice, and pallid blossoms of frost.

Does the May seem long in coming with its blessed
gift of flowers?
Does Winter drag with lagging step a frozen chain
of hours?
Wait yet a little, darling, and the days will not be
long

Before we feel the breath of Spring and hear the
 robin's song.
Then hand in hand we'll hasten to the sunny south-
 ern slope
Where lifts the brave Hepatica its lilac buds of hope;
And we'll hunt the wide wood over for the sweet and
 secret place
Where beside the melting snow-drift we shall spy the
 Mayflower's face.

But when the shadiest spot in all the woods has lost
 its snow,
And when the softly greening fields with Dandelions
 glow,
Then we'll seek the grassy hollow where the hooded
 Violet dwells,
And Wild Oats swing to every breeze their dainty
 waxen bells;
And the bank where Wood Anemones' uncounted
 fragile heads
Droop over tufted Innocence, thick set in snowy beds;
Or where the bright Marsh Marigold by the sluggish
 meadow rill
Makes the Bloodroot's pure, pale petals seem paler,
 purer still.
And we'll wander by the river where beside the
 water's edge
Grow the White Thorn's milky clusters and the Early
 Saxifrage.
Then we'll find a hill I know and climb its dry and
 shady side,

Where the Twistfoot's tiny lilies under spreading
 leaflets hide;
Where Pepperroot and Bishop's Cap in white pro-
 fusion flock,
And the red and yellow Columbine leaps gaily from
 the rock;
Where the buried Seal of Solomon its banner waves
 in air,
And Clintonia and Starflower smile about us every-
 where.
Then we'll find the deep secluded vale where never
 sunbeam goes,
Through which the tortuous brook with slow and
 stealthy motion flows,
Where the scent of crushed White Violets makes
 redolent our tracks,
And from half a hundred Pulpits hold forth as
 many Jacks;
Where Mitrewort and Goldthread over oozing mosses
 run,
And Ferns uncoiling climb after the spectre of a sun.
And when the way is roughest for the tender patient
 feet,
Lo! the pink-veined Smiling Wakerobin, a vision
 bright, we greet!

O flowers of May, that meet in field or wood the soft
 Spring air,
What has earth that she can offer us more beautiful
 or rare?
Though the flowers of June blush redder than ever
 those of May,

And the flowers of ripe September are gladder and
more gay,
Yet Spring is always lovelier than Summer or than
Fall,
And to me the flowers of May are the sweetest flowers
of all.

So wait a little, darling, till we hear the robins sing,
And the fields put on their green to greet the coming
of the Spring,—
Then the flowers that make forest or field or river-
bank their home
Shall be ours to love and wonder at as through their
haunts we roam.

CALYPSO

WHERE the tiny brooklet slowly
Trickles over mosses lowly,
Where the tall columnar beeches
Thickly spread their verdant reaches,
From the black earth lightly rising,
Springs a flower of grace surprising.

'Tis a butterfly, whose shaded
Purples in the dusk have faded,
And that droops her wings sedately;
Or a lady, shy and stately,
Standing coy with head a-tip so,—
That's my dainty maid Calypso!

Palest purple, faint and tender,
Are the wavy petals slender;
Gold and crimson-flecked the staining
Of the lip's translucent veining;
Bird-like poises on her laden
Taper stem my woodland maiden.

None but eyes of eager lover
Can her hiding-place discover;
May by May, unsought and lonely,
She unfolds, displaying only
To the leaning ferns her sweetness,
And her delicate completeness.

O you crowd of gaudy, flaunting
Roadside weeds, your beauty vaunting,

Modesty is gone, with blushing,
Out of fashion, but no pushing
Blowzy girl, with hand on hip so,
Can compare with my Calypso!

SOMNUS PLANTARUM

LINNÆUS, studying at Upsala, went

One night among his flowers,
To find a rare exotic sent
From the far Orient's untraversed bowers.
Alas! the blossom had been plucked away;
"Strange," quoth the sage, "it opened but today."

But when at dawn of day he happened by,
The flower at evening missed
Lifted to his its answering eye,
Bedimmed with dew, by morning sunbeams kissed,
The fairest gem that decked the garden bed;
"My eyes are growing dull," Linnæus said.

When next again the shadowy night came on,
Again he sought its side,
And lo! once more the flower was gone;
But searching soon its hiding-place he spied,—
The star-like blossom to a bud had closed,
And underneath a spreading leaf reposed.

With lamp in hand, adown the garden beds,
Linnæus hastened now,
And saw in long and wavering threads
The limp leaves hang from the Acacia bough;
The thorny Locust drooped in languid rest;
The Trefoil's hands were folded on its breast.

The white Datura's trumpet slackly fell,
The Bindweed's border pink

Was coiled into a fluted shell,
The Iris' eye under the stars did blink,
The Poppy's face beneath its hood was hid,
The Tulip's cup became a pyramid.

Each drooping leaf seemed locked in slumber deep;
 Wrapt in the sheltering gloom,
 Each folded floweret seemed to sleep;
The man of science gained his lonely room,
And pondering long in the still morning hours,
Composed a treatise on the Sleep of Flowers.

VIOLETS

It was a bunch of violets,
In purple, proud array,
That on a lady's Easter hat
Came gaily down Broadway.

It was a tuft of violets,
Deep in a forest nook,
That lifted up shy, dewy heads
Beside a pebbled brook.

Now if the lady's violets
Were planted in the glen,
How soon would fade the tawdry things,
Under the mist and rain!

And on Broadway wild violets
Would quickly wilt and die;
One kind was made for the city street,—
The other for God's eye.

A GARDEN OF ROSES

WHERE is a prettier sight to see
Than Kate in a garden of roses?
From flower to lovelier flower she runs
With twinkling feet, as yet fairer ones
Each turn of the path discloses.

Gleefully laughs the little maid
As into her apron she tosses
Roses red and yellow and white,
Buds and blossoms wide-blown to the light,
Little sweet-briers and mosses.

Here, where a worm lies coiled in the bud,
With pitiful sigh she lingers;
Now springs to catch the brightest of all,
But ugly thorns bid the swift tears fall,
Stinging the tender fingers.

May you pick the roses of life, dear Kate,
In the garden of the years;
May they give to your hand their sweet perfume,
With no worm in the bud to blight their bloom,
Nor thorns to be drenched with tears!

May you gather the rare red rose of love,
And the golden buds of laughter,
And the white rose of peace that shall not fade —
May the roses of life be yours, little maid,
And the roses of heaven come after!

A DAY IN JUNE

THE sun shines down and the river shines up,
And there's not a cloud in the sky;
On the wilted tulip's belated cup
Hangs a languid butterfly.

The elm-leaves float on the motionless air;
Not a ripple stirs the grass;
Not a ruffle touches the river's glare
As it crawls like a snake of brass.

No sound save the murmur of the falls
Breaks the stillness; the note of a bird,
Answering as one to the other calls,
Since daybreak I have not heard.

The sparrow pants on her heated nest
And lifts her beak to the sky;
Slowly the sun drops toward the west,
And the shadows easterly lie.

To east, to west, like the seeking dove,
My longing glances go;
There is nought but the flame of the sun above,
And the blaze of the river below.

The breath of nature is still in the trees;
The voice of nature is dumb;
Will night when it comes bring a cooling breeze?
Ah, the night, will it ever come?

The river shines up and the sun shines down,
And the glare and the glittering
Are heavy and hard as a jeweled crown
On the brow of a weary king.

EVENING

If it were never even,
If the time were always day,
If the blazing sun in heaven
Never sank from sight away;

How we should miss the gloaming,
With its purple shadowy light,
Miss the slow and solemn coming
Of the darkness and the night!

Like breezes from the river
To a still and sultry town;
As on fields that thirst and quiver
The reviving rain comes down;

Like fleecy snow that covers
All the bare and rugged ground;
Like the hush intense that hovers
After harmonies of sound.

Like the delight that lingers
When we lay the poem by;
Like the touch of cooling fingers
Upon eyelids hot and dry;

So come the shades of even,
And the restful dark of night,
As a gracious gift of Heaven
To the tired and dazzled sight.

A HINT OF AUTUMN

THE sun upon the terrace
With summer radiance smiles,
But a breath of autumn in the air
Belies his friendly wiles.

There come two yellow elm-leaves
Down dropping from the trees,
And a dandelion's parachute
Is lifted by the breeze.

White thistle seeds are wafted
To and fro on plummy wings,
And each light-driven messenger
A hint of autumn brings.

A flock of idle fancies
Flit in and out my head,
Like snowy, floating thistle-down
By autumn zephyrs led.

The thistle's wings grow weary,
And the dandelion light
Sinks deep into the ripened grass,
And both are lost to sight.

But as the seasons circle
There will rise from out the mold
The beauty of the thistle's flame,
And the dandelion's gold.

So perhaps my floating fancies
 May be seeds from which shall spring
In sunny summers Nature's crown
 Of gracious blossoming.

MAY AND NOVEMBER

A MOMENT stands in musing mood
A young and winsome maiden;
With fragrant trophies of the wood
Her glowing arms are laden.

The robins in the maple trees
Their happy loves are telling;
Beneath their rusty coats she sees
The cherry blossoms swelling.

The sky is blue above; the ground
Its vernal green is showing;
The river sings with murmurous sound,
In new-found freedom flowing.

'Tis spring! The founts of nature start
To greet the welcome comer;
The springtime in the maiden's heart
Goes forth to meet the summer.

Amid the wreck of summer stands
A slender drooping maiden;
Her heart with vanished joys, her hands
With faded flowers are laden.

Struck by the arrows of the frost,
The blasted flowers are dying;
Above the sere leaves, torn and tossed,
November winds are sighing.

With sougning of the pines is blent
The moaning of the river;
Touched by a chill presentiment,
The sombre meadows shiver.

The light of spring has died away
In autumn's ashen ember;
The hopes that budded in the May
Are blighted in November.

But still shall ruin feel the power
Of time's restoring fingers;
Not ever stays the midnight hour,
Nor always autumn lingers.

And soon shall kindly nature fling
Her blessed snow-flakes over,
The desolation of the spring
With tender veil to cover.

EVENING ON THE SAINT LAWRENCE

As azure day to iridescent eve
Turns on the tranquil tide,
The reaches of the mighty stream we leave,
And with quick oar-dip glide
Into a shallow inlet, over-laced
With riotous greenery, and with lilies graced.

Before us serried rushes sway, and spring
Astern alert and high;
And blue and yellow pond-flowers clustered swing
Their merry splendors nigh;
And spiral water-weeds with slimy coil
Hug the tired oar, and make each stroke a toil.

Along the close-laid pads we peer in vain
For blossoming loveliness;
In fruitless quest we scan the verdurous plain —
Till lo! our hopes to bless,
Like a white star between the gathering glooms,
One golden-hearted water-lily blooms.

Through curling, clinging weeds, with laboring oar,
By many a twist and turn,
Out of the sluggish bay we slide once more
Where on the open burn
Westward the torches of the passing day,
To light in shining track our homeward way.

Canadian meadows follow near and green,
And faint hills southward smile;

Soft skies to softer waters smile between,
And isle to violet isle;
And east and west bright narrowing vistas make
Two climbing purple paths to sea and lake.

So, slipping o'er the pliant wave, we come,
Under the paling skies,
Into that twilight water-world which dumb
Of all earth's voices lies,
Still of all sound, save that the air be stirred
By whirring wing of startled river bird.

Amid the shadowy isles, athwart our bow,
One shadowy isle grows clear,—
Its slim horizon line in welcome, now,
With gracious curve draws near,—
Its pines and birches darkly against the sky,
And darkly doubled in the river lie.

One fragrant water-lily is the prize
Our sunset voyage has brought;
A summer's night its sweetness lives, and dies,
Leaving a lily thought,
A fragrant thought that winter-long shall stay,
A star-like memory for a distant day.

A CHARGE ACCOUNT

(April 19, 1775)

IN the still o' the night the British crept
Across the river from Boston town;
The little birds in the treetops slept,
And the undimmed stars looked calmly down.

Sombre and gray was the early light
As they wound their way through Cambridge street,
And the officers grumbled, as well they might,
For the breakfast they had failed to eat.

"Here is a house," one Captain said,
"And an ancient dame in the door I see;
Come, goodwife, bring us meat and bread,
And pour thy choicest wine and tea!"

"The harbor waves are over the tea,
But in the larder are bread and wine;
Help yourselves to what pleaseth ye,
But ask no service from hand o' mine!"

They ate and they drank, and with song and jest
Made blithe the hour, till the rising sun
Sent them its warning from the east
To follow the men to Lexington.

"Thanks, old dame, for thy rebel cheer,"
Quoth the Captain when the feast was done,
"We will pay thee next time we breakfast here,"
And they galloped away to Lexington.

Alack! but how the regulars fled

When they met the yeomen at Concord bridge,
How the Middlesex farmers after them sped,
Over the highway, along the ridge.

Oh, back they came with unseemly speed

Through Cambridge street, and with head adown!
For bread and for wine they had no need
As they hurried their way toward Boston town.

INDIAN MONUMENT ON OLDTOWN ISLAND

(Erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution of
Maine)

WHEN of old our fathers fought
Precious liberty to gain,
Friendship, help and guidance brought
Indians of the tribes of Maine.

Foot to foot, o'er forest trail,
Trode the white man and the red;
Hand to hand did neither fail;
Brow to brow oft lay the dead.

Marsh and maze and mountain through,
Lake and stream and river o'er,
Stealthy foot or swift canoe
Safe the soldier's message bore.

When the pathless wintry wild
Freemen dared with valor fine,
Through the snows the forest child
Led the spent and broken line.

Loyal to a cause not theirs,
Faithful to an alien race,
Writ in bronze, their story bears
Something of ideal grace.

We, the daughters of the brave,
Children's children of the free,
Now beside Penobscot's wave
Rear this stone of memory.

On this islet in the tide,
Refuge of a remnant race,
Long as brass and stone abide
Passers shall the legend trace,—

How the children grateful own
Loyalty their grandsires knew,
Graving on memorial stone,
“These were to our fathers true.”

Age to age and shore to shore,
While the rivers seek the sea,
Faith is lovely evermore,
Beautiful is loyalty.

God, who of one blood hast made
All the nations, honor now
Ancient friendship, unbetrayed,
Brothers they, our Father thou!

THE DECENNIAL

As in some eddy of the river where
The wave lies calm and water lilies blow
The traveler lingers, rests his oar-dip there,
So we a moment stay to pluck the fair
Lilies of memory that in stillness grow.

As on some rock that overlooks the lea
The climber waits to catch with joy the broad
Vista of widening wood and lake, so we
Waiting the plain in widening round may see,
And mark the devious paths our feet have trod.

From east and west, the borders of the land,
Once more we come together for a day;
Beneath the shade of College walls we stand,
And hold each other by the friendly hand,
And look the greeting words may weakly say.

Ah, what vicissitudes of hope and fear,
Pleasure and pain the fleeting years have brought!
Have the alluring dreams of youth drawn near
In visible form, or fled before the drear
Advancing day? Has life been as we thought?

To each has life unrolled as He has planned
Who all directs. Surely his guiding eye
Has still with kindness watched us and his hand
In mercy led,—our names unbroken stand,
The dark death angel's wing has passed us by.

But, speaking thus, my words a moment stay,
With thought of one in girlhood's early bloom
Who from us faded as a flower away,—
My heart would pause a little, so to lay
One lily of remembrance on her tomb.

How close the memories crowd! O summer days
Of long, long sunshine, winter days of calm,
When still unburdened by life's cares the ways
Of student lore we followed, strong to raise
Against all obstacle victorious arm!

Aught that athwart that sky a shade might bring
We have forgotten; only pleasantness
Stands forth today for our remembering.
Those college years, that sped with rapid wing,
We will recall henceforward but to bless.

How strangely with familiar faces seen
Familiar habits reassert their power!
So we forget the years that lie between,
And once again upon the College green
As students linger, dreaming for an hour.

Is it a dream? The Campus elms still wear
The summer's crown of glory as they wore;
The bell in wonted tone to morning prayer
Yet summons; brick and stone unchanged are there,—
We too are students, classmates as of yore.

Let no one break the spell by which we meet
As classmates still on this memorial day.

In happy phrase will each the other greet,
Linking anew the bond of friendship sweet,
And parting "Till we meet again" will say.

THE GOLDEN WEDDING

C. M. AND S. D. M.

GOLDEN the rivers run,
And golden is the light that fills
The circling heavens, when the sun
Of a fair day leans toward the western hills.

Golden the ripened maize,
And crowned with gold the woods appear,
When come the lovely autumn days
That consummate the promise of the year.

This sunset bright with gold,
This gracious golden fall have they,
Whose hands their children's children hold
To greet them on their fiftieth wedding day.

There were two threads that met
The Weaver, spun in different lands,
And in the warp of life were set
Beside each other by his careful hands.

For half a hundred years,
Unbroke in dangers manifold,
Together kept in joys and fears,
The threads have changed today to gleaming gold.

Long may the slender threads
Their course along the web pursue!
Heaven's choicest blessings on their heads,
Whose lives have been so earnest and so true!

May golden splendor fill
The beauty of the eventide,
And sunset brighter grow until
It turns to sunrise on the other side!

A SONG OF FRIENDSHIP

C. A. W.

LIKE birds that wait upon the wing
Their joy and love in song to expend,
We busy women pause to bring
Tribute of love and praise and song
To her who has been our leader long,
And long our friend.

Her friends are many, for she doth
Her friendliness to all extend;
Her heart is like the hurrying moth,
It gathers toll from many fields;
So many a flower its perfume yields,
And many a friend.

For she has seen how each is bound
To all, and all on each depend,—
Life linked with life in mystic round,—
Sister with sister women she
In love's fair solidarity,
And each a friend.

She loves all causes high and good;
Eager is she herself to spend,
To give to suffering womanhood,
Pitiful childhood, youth oppressed,
Or tempted manhood of her best —
To all a friend.

And they who toil, with burdened heart,
The ragged scars of earth to mend,

Who in the conflict's van have part,
Whose spirits are brave, whose hands are strong,
To battle against ancient wrong,
Find her a friend.

Not she of those whose timid souls
Before antique conventions bend;
A fairer age to faith unrolls,
Too new for her no liberty,—
Her the young twentieth century
Owns as a friend.

The voices of God's out-of-doors
For her in friendly music blend;
The river murmuring to its shores,
The minstrel birds, the whispering trees,
The chattering rain,—she is to these
Lover and friend.

The earliest bud that pricks the mold
Is hers to love and watch and tend;
Lily and rose for her unfold;
Rose and lily and daffodil
Bloom sweetest in her garden still —
They know their friend.

The heart that loves the human yearns
The all-loving Heart to apprehend;
She, who loves all his creatures, turns
Her heart to the Highest, meek yet bold,
And is, like Abraham of old,
Of God the friend.

He, whom his friends' uplifted gaze
Beheld from Olivet ascend,
Whose promise holds through all the days,
Whose life was love,— to men he saith,
“ Who doeth my commands in faith,
I call my friend.”

Sweet friend, Christ's peace for thee we pray,
His love be thine, world without end ;
His grace support thee on thy way ;
His heavenly welcome, when the gate
Shall swing that swingeth soon or late,
Be thine, dear friend.

Our loving thoughts, like pearls to wear
Star-like upon the breast, we send ;
Our hearts' desires, like blossoms fair,
Into bright garlands have we wound
For her the gentle years have crowned,
Our gentle friend.

THE PASTOR

C. V. H.

God heard the prayer of his people,
In heaven his dwelling-place;
His messenger he sent to bear
The evangel of his grace.

For witness and for service
Commissioned from above,
Obedient came, in Jesus' name,
The herald of God's love.

The armor of the kingdom,
Soldier of Christ, he wore;
With peace of God his feet were shod;
The shield of faith he bore.

He spoke the words of Jesus,—
Repent, believe, obey!
Hands, do his will! Feet, follow still!
Heart, love, and love alway!

O blessed words of Jesus!
They die not with the hour;
Like living things, like seeds with wings,
They carry germs of power.

O living words of Jesus!
Still life from life shall spring;
In distant days, by unknown ways,
New fruitage shall they bring.

So day by day God's herald
His pure evangel brought;
The faithful word of the risen Lord
Line upon line he taught.

In a cloudy world God's sunshine
He garnered from the sky;
In the shadow of death he showed to faith
The dayspring from on high.

Into the homes of the people
He walked with happy word;
Incense of prayer ascended there,
Sweet savor to the Lord.

On the joy of life God's blessing
He asked at the festal hour;
For the heart oppressed he prayed God's rest,
For the helpless one God's power.

The tender lambs he guided
To the good shepherd's fold;
In Jesus' stead, beside the dead
Of deathless life he told.

Suddenly to the workman,
At the mid hour of the day,
The Lord's command came,— Hold thy hand,
Serve me another way!

Waiting is hardest service;
Silence is bravest song;

Sweet sermons come, when lips are dumb,
From the patient heart and strong.

Meekly in life's Gethsemane
He bowed the cup to drain,
Full to the brim, God offered him,
The sacrament of pain.

And when the days were ended,
And when the hours were told,
By the shining portal of the city immortal
He entered the streets of gold.

On earth the turbid river!
In heaven the crystal sea!
Our thought may climb the stair of time
And find eternity.

Our hearts may keep the lesson
He taught in life and death,
May apprehend, world without end,
The victory of faith.

In the city of many mansions,
Where Christ hath gone before,
Where is no night, for God is light,
He dwelleth evermore.

There is surcease of sorrow;
There death his pang doth stay;
The unwept tears of mortal years
God's hand shall wipe away.

The nations to Emmanuel
Their hymn of glory sing,
And night and day they serve alway
Who stand before the King.

DEDICATION HYMN

GOD may be worshiped where the praying heart
With faith looks up in solitude apart,
But 'tis his pleasure that his people raise
To Heaven the voice of their united praise.

Our Lord has promised that where two or three
Meet in his name, himself shall with them be;
From age to age his promise holds the same,
And we this house have reared unto his name.

Without the fire, unblessed the altar were;
Without the Presence, void the house of prayer;
Now may God's love upon his church descend,
And Christ meet here his people, friend with friend!

Here may the Lord a wonted guest abide,
As erst within the home on Olive's side;
And here may they that call upon his name
Believing wait, nor want the tongues of flame!

Unceasing from these altars to the skies
May incense of sincere petition rise;
To hungry souls may bread of life be given,
And wayward feet learn here the road to Heaven!

May children's lips the love of Jesus sing,
And sorrow-laden hearts find comforting!
So from these courts shall a great host ascend
To raise in Heaven worship that knows no end.

KNITTERS IN THE SHADOW

ON the train, by the fireside, in the street
We are knitting, knitting;
Our thoughts, in tune with our needles fleet,
Afar are flitting.

They fly to trenches over the sea,
Where battles stay,—
Surely our yarn should scarlet be
Instead of gray.

The little lad waits at the knee
For a smile and a kiss,—
We sigh for mothers over the sea
Who dear ones miss.

Mothers are mothers the world around,
In hut and on throne;
These for the love of sacred ground
Have offered their own.

Boys in the trenches their land have brought
The ultimate gift,
What they might have been, what they might have
wrought,
When shadows lift,—

The joy of youth, and the strength of age,
And the fruit of time,
And high endeavor, and counsel sage,
And art sublime.

Life have they given, and we — could we give
 Gift so complete,
Life of our life that the land might live,
 Life fair and sweet?

O God, today make America strong,
 In vision clear,
True and kind, and wise, and pure of wrong,
 High above fear!

So our own shall be rendered to the State
 For life, not death,
To serve America clean and great
 In act and faith.

We kiss the little lad at the knee
 With a prayer and a tear,—
Are not the children over the sea
 As sweet and dear?

God in his mercy bring the hour
 When wars shall cease,
And around the earth shall march with power
 The Prince of Peace!

NEW VISION

WHILE Europe counts her dead —
Rachel weeping her own —
Not to be comforted,
Shall we, aloof, alone,
Walk lightly down the casual ways of life,
Deaf to the storm, oblivious to the strife?

Nay, rather we with these
In spirit would hand in hand
Venture the fiery seas,
Traverse the quaking land,
So, looking upward from the war-torn sod,
Behold anew, as they, the face of God.

Nations that walk in flame
Shall a new vision know;
Out of the pit the same
Never their souls shall go,
But in the valley of the shadow find
That Father's hand they lost when they were blind.

A LOWLY PART

I SAW a flower in the wood;
It was a scentless thing and pale;
It had no fruit that could avail
 For human food.

“Poor flower,” I said, “you are so small,
You have not beauty like the rose,
You are the slightest thing that grows,—
 Why grow at all?”

The flower replied, “I do not know
Why I so small and pale should be;
I know that life is given me,
 And so I grow.”

I saw an insect in the light
Of a slant sunbeam fluttering;
It rose and fell on gauzy wing
 From morn till night.

I asked it, “Why attempt to fly?
You are the creature of a day;
You cannot, as the eagle may,
 Approach the sky.”

The fly replied, “For such as I
Too subtle are your questionings;
I know that God has given me wings,
 And so I fly.”

I heard a bird, at break of light,
Singing again and yet again
His one unmusical refrain,
 With all his might.

I said, "Poor bird, you cannot vie
With one of all this warbling throng,
With robin, wren or thrush in song,—
 Why do you try?"

"I know I am a humble thing,"
The bird said, "with my one weak note,
But God has given me a throat,
 And so I sing."

I looked within, and lo! my heart
Sat idly in her home and sighed,
Because she could not brook for pride
 A lowly part.

"Sad heart," I whispered, "have you heard,
And will you take, proud heart, for dower
The simple reasoning of flower,
 And fly and bird?"

"Whether your life be pale, or glow
With brilliant color, rainbow-dyed,
He, the Life-giver, shall decide,—
 'Tis yours to grow.

"Whether you soaring win the sky,
Or low in earthly region stay,
'Tis His who gave you wings to say,—
 'Tis yours to fly.

“ Whether your tones be weak, or ring
With music passionate and strong,
'Tis His to choose, who gave you song,—
’Tis yours to sing.”

FOLLOW THOU ME

As unto Peter on the sea,
 Plying his father's trade, with thought
 Beyond his daily toil for nought,
So came the voice of Christ to me,
 "Follow thou me!"

"Come, leave thy nets upon the sea,
 And leave thy boat upon the shore,
 And over mountain, marsh, and moor,
From Galilee to Calvary,
 Come, follow me!"

When up the mount my way I take,
 A solemn watch with him to keep,
 And sink o'ercome in shameful sleep,
His patient voice I hear, "Awake,
 And follow me!"

When at the trial hour I fall,
 Afraid to own my stricken Lord,
 His swift look pierces like a sword;
"Repent, repent," I hear him call,
 "And follow me!"

Or when my restless heart would see
 The cross another has to bear,
 The task another does, I hear
The gentle, "What is that to thee?
 Follow thou me!"

O Christ, my Lord, I come to thee;
Give me thy strength upon my way;
Help me to take the cross each day,
Heavy or light, thou givest me,
And follow thee.

Across tempestuous Galilee,
Or up Mount Hermon's rapturous height,
Or climbing in the depths of night
The thorny side of Calvary,
I'd follow thee.

I'd follow thee in life, in death,
Thou suffering, sad, triumphant one,
And wait to hear thine own "Well done;
As thou hast overcome by faith,
So rest in me."

THE MOUNTAIN WAY

O THOU, who standest doubting
At the parting of the ways,
Young traveler, whose years are told
In happy summer days,—

Choose in thy life's bright morning
To walk the paths of truth,
And give unto thy waiting Lord
The ardor of thy youth.

Turn from the smiling valley,
And take the mountain way,
Which leads through darkness, storm, and cloud
To heights of endless day.

The mountain side is shrouded;
Thou canst not see how steep
The path, beside what precipice,
Or through what torrent deep.

But at its untried dangers
Shrink not nor be afraid;
Though hard the road for tender feet,
Yet be not thou dismayed.

For where the beetling cliff-side
With its black shadow lowers,
Of hope's own hue, to comfort thee,
Shall spring the Bluebell's flowers.

And where thy way is roughest,
Across the broken ice,
Shall bloom for thee the flower of faith,
The snowy Edelweiss.

And where the shifting torrent
Has left its stony sands,
Above the stones God's messengers
Shall bear thee in their hands.

And if through fiery trial
Thine upward pathway lie,
One like unto the Son of God
Shall keep thee company.

There is no part so dreary
But One has gone before;
There is no desolating flood
But One has crossed it o'er.

There is no spot where fiercely
The mountain tempests beat,
But thou mayst trace upon the rock
The prints of bleeding feet.

There is no place where terror
With brooding blackness lies,
But One has pierced its loneliness
With the anguish of his eyes.

Fear not but he is with thee,
Doubt not that it is he,
Although the rolling mist shall hide
The face thou fain wouldst see.

Wait till thine upward journey,
Thy long life-task, is done;
Wait till the highest mountain peak
Thy steadfast feet have won.

Then, on the mountain summit,
The heavy valley mist,
Parting, shall to thine unsealed eyes
Reveal the risen Christ!

IN HIS TIME

WHEN Israel clamored for a king,
And would not heed the prophet's word,
And would not hearken to the Lord,
Nor wait the blessing he would bring
In his own time,

Then God, the King they had denied,
Gave at their word their wilful prayer,
Grieved that the people of his care
Should from his leading turn aside
Time after time.

Ah, Israel! faithless, slow to see,
Forgetful of the guiding Hand
That brought thee to the promised land,
That every gift hath given thee
In God's own time!

Lo! distant from the clamoring horde,
Where Bethlehem's fair homesteads lie,
In sweet unconscious infancy,
Sleeps David, chosen of the Lord
For his own time.

How oft, like Israel, petulant,
With quick hot pulses which refuse
To wait God's purposes, we choose
Ourselves the good we dream we want,
Ourselves the time!

The black and heavy-hanging gate
Which shutteth out futurity
We may not lift; we cannot see
Where, just beyond, our Davids wait
The Lord's own time.

The tender is the Hand and kind
Which granteth not the prayer we plead,
The Voice that saith to hearts that bleed,
"The balm that healeth thou shalt find
In God's own time."

Our feet, that fain would step on flowers,
The desert sands tread wearily;
Fainting, "How long, O Lord?" we cry,—
But not as ours, oh, not as ours
Is the Lord's time!

The thing we crave is still the thing
To which his gracious "No" he saith;
But patient eyes, that wait in faith,
Shall in his beauty see the King
In God's own time.

Then let us not too clamorous
Upon our selfish wishes dwell,
Lest, as rebellious Israel,
The Lord in anger answer us
In our own time.

Perhaps our prayer is for a stone,
When he with bread would heap our board;

Then rather, like our suffering Lord,
Pray we, "O God, thy will be done,
In thine own time!"

He knoweth life, he knoweth death,
Our knowledge knoweth but in part;
Be still, be still, impatient heart,
Labor in hope and pray in faith,
And wait God's time!

When, yearning for the victory won,
With importunity we pray,
"Thy kingdom come," yet let us say
With the same breath, "Thy will be done,
We wait thy time."

He that hath promised it shall bless;
What hath been spoken shall be done;
It shall not fail that David's Son
Shall rule the world in righteousness
In God's own time.

MY CONFIDENCE

I KNOW not what to pray for as I ought;
I know not how to pray; for when I try
To lift to Heaven my heart, my errant thought
Roves earthward still. But while I wait and sigh,
Within the veil the High Priest intercedes,
And ere I ask the Father knows my needs.

My sins are numberless, and nought my worth;
Over my head are mine iniquities.
Too heavy were the burden; held to earth
Beneath its load, I could not lift mine eyes.
But One there is hath borne my sins for me,
Himself, in his own body on the tree.

I cannot ever in my heart obey
The pure commandment of the Lord, nor keep
Perfect his perfect law a single day;
The stain of earth on my torn robe lies deep.
But One hath clothed me in a spotless dress;
On his obedience rests my righteousness.

I know but darkly and in part my Lord,
With many a doubt, and many a wavering;
But dully hears the sheep the Shepherd's word;
But dimly sees my soul her thorn-crowned King.
Yet standeth strong the sure foundation stone,
Having this seal, The Lord doth know his own.

Faulty and frail the love I bear to him
Who first with everlasting love loved me;

Who quaffed the cup of sorrow, filled to brim,
For his love's sake, in dark Gethsemane.
But he who loved so much hath called me friend,
And having loved he loveth to the end.

No merit of my own, O Christ, I plead;
Not conquering faith, and not prevailing prayer;
My soul hath utter emptiness and need,
I look to thee, and find my fulness there.
Thy word I trust, thy intercession claim,
Lean on thy strength, and speak to Heaven thy name.

SAMUEL

(From the German of Karl Gerok)

THRICE at midnight did the Lord
Call to Samuel as he slept,
While at Shiloh faithful ward
O'er the holy ark he kept;
Thrice the boy to Eli hurried,
Asking, "What is thy behest?"
"Dreams the child?" the old man murmured,
"Go and lay thee down to rest."

But when for the third time woke
Eli, and young Samuel saw,
Then, as by a lightning stroke,
Felt his soul a sudden awe.
"Go, my child, lie down and listen,
'Tis the Lord to thee appears,
List, and comes again the summons,
Cry, 'O Lord, thy servant hears!'"

Then he goes to meet the Lord,
And he hears with wondering
From Jehovah's mouth a word,
Which in Israel's ears shall ring;
And the light of heaven's morning
Dawns in Samuel's childish breast,
He himself, as judge and prophet,
Israel's leader stands confessed.

Friends, to me it once befell,
When from sleep of soul I woke,

As of old to Samuel,
So to me Jehovah spoke.
In a place of quiet, sudden,
On my heart in silence broke
Words of strange, unwonted meaning,
And I did not know who spoke.

Hastened I, and sought alone
How I might their meaning find,
Bowed at earthly wisdom's throne,
But she was like Eli blind,
Lay like Eli half in slumber,
Hardly heard my question through,
Said, "Thou makest idle clamor,
Thou wert dreaming, sleep anew."

Then I threw me down again,
Dreamed with mind and soul as well,
But the voice rang ever plain
Through the darkness, "Samuel!"
At that silent hour of midnight
Flashed it like the lightning clear,
Man, it is the Lord who calls thee,
And I answered, "Lord, I hear!"

And I asked no longer word
Said by man, but trembling then
Bowed I down before the Lord,
Dreamed I not nor slept again.
In the solemn hour of midnight,
God the Lord talked to his child,
Talked with words of heavenly kindness,
Tones unutterably mild.

Dreadful words of warning spoke,
Which no mortal ruler might,—
Blessed words of promise broke
Through the clouds of earthly night.
What no human mouth has uttered,
What no human mind has thought,
Heard the heart whom God, Jehovah,
In the silent midnight sought.

LOVEST THOU ME?

(From the German of Karl Gerok)

LOVEST thou me? O Simon, dost thou listen?
Thy Savior talks with thee beside the sea.
Lovest thou me? The sunlit waters glisten —
Bethink thee well the word he asks of thee.
His gracious lips are questioning so sweetly,
His holy eye looks through thy soul completely,—
What is it, son of Jonas, troubles thee?
Lovest thou me?

Lovest thou me? How bold wast thou declaring,—
Though all shall faithless be, yet will not I;
And yet — and yet — hast thou forgot thy swearing,
When shamelessly thou didst thy Lord deny?
Is this the rock on which my church is founded,
The Peter whose profession loudest sounded,
Who would unto the death my follower be?
Lovest thou me?

Lovest thou me? I seek no loud profession;
I only ask,— does love within thee live?
Come, dry thy tears, poor child, and make confession,
Give me thy hand, thy heart repentant give.
O bruised reed, no touch shall ruthless break thee,
O smoking flax, no breath shall lightly shake thee,
If yet one glimmering spark of flame there be —
Lovest thou me?

Lovest thou me? I have deserved it truly,
My yoke is easy and my burden light;

Have not green pastures waited for thee duly,
When thou hast trusted to my guiding might?
Thy Shepherd, on the precipice that stayed thee,
Upon his shoulder tenderly that laid thee,
Who unto death went forth for love of thee —
Lovest thou me?

Lovest thou me? With patient hand and tender,
Give to my sheep the food I gave to thee;
O grateful penance for the heart to render,
That glows with love and gratitude to me.
Thyself hast erred, go forth to seek the erring,
Guide them unto the Heaven thyself art nearing,
Protect my flock from their arch-enemy.
Lovest thou me?

Lovest thou me? Then keep my lambs from straying;
My little ones I bind upon thy heart,
Still in the dubious land of twilight staying,—
Lead them unto the sun with patient art.
If thou dost love me, to my own be loving,
By service done unto my weak ones proving
The love thou bearest him who strengthens thee.
Lovest thou me?

Lovest thou me? A hand shall gird thee rougher
Than thou hast known, and lead against thy will;
That which the Shepherd bore the sheep must suffer,—
O son of Jonas, wilt thou love me still?
Love yet is love although the tempests lower,

Love yet is love although the flames devour,
Love sings its praises on the cruel tree —
 Lovest thou me?

Lovest thou me? — Thou knowest all, my Master,
My craven cowardice, my feeble zeal;
O let thy heavenly fire burn brighter, faster,
Until my frozen heart its warmth shall feel!
Write thou upon my soul the word thou speakest,
And I, of all who love thee, Lord, the weakest,
Will say,— I have denied, yet pardon me —
 Still love I thee!

REST AWHILE

WITH weak yet willing hand, dear Lord, I thought
To serve thy kingdom; when in heart I prayed,—
Thy kingdom come, full eagerly I sought
With hand to help. Alas! my hand is stayed.
Stayed is thy hand and helpless, child of mine,—
Yet shall my light upon the nations shine,
My kingdom rule, my name from sea to sea
Among the heathen shall exalted be.

The world is out of joint and suffering,—
I thought to help to mend it. Ah, dear Lord!
It was thy world I longed to help and bring
Into obedience to thy righteous word.
The world is mine, my child, I made it — I
Will help and that right early. Cease to sigh!
Leave in thy Father's heart its suffering,
And hide under the shadow of my wing.

I wished to solace those who sit apart,
The little ones of earth, the poor, the sad,
To lay my heart beside another's heart,
And just a little moment make it glad.
Mine, mine the charge, my child, over my own;
Their angels do behold me on my throne.
Withdraw thine anxious thought, and let thy heart
Dwell in the secret place of God apart.

So leave the kingdom to the King who knows,
And leave the world unto the God who cares,
The little ones to him who seeking goes,

And tender lambs upon his bosom bears.
Come thou apart with me a little space
Into a lonely place, a quiet place,
Content to rest awhile, and for my sake
A happy spot for those who love thee make.

For I have other hands that stoutly bear
The weapons of my warfare, others who
In the world's battle front shall stand and dare,
And lovingly the world's hard service do.
But thou shalt sacrifice to me thy will,
Meekly obey my mandate to be still.
Who rest at my command as well deserve
As they that toil — who wait shall also serve.

IN HER HEART

WHEN the day was done,
And the little one fed,
Mary laid her baby son
On his white bed.

Beside him, kneeling there
In the stillness, alone,
To the Heavenly Father's care
She trusted his own,—

Praying God would make the street
Smooth and clean and straight,
Down which those baby feet
Must travel late,—

Praying God would make light
The sorrowful load
Those hands should carry quite
To the end of the road,—

Praying God would take away
A full and bitter cup
That on one dark day
Should be lifted up.

With words not her own
So did Mary pray,
Fearing the end unknown
Of the dolorous way.

With a troubled breast,
Not seeing light,
She went to her rest,
And pondered in the night.

She thought of three men,
And a tale they told,
And in her mind again
Counted the gold.

Of frankincense fine
She thought, and of a word —
That the child should be a sign,
And to her should come a sword.

But a shadow and a fear
Darkly folded her
When she tried to see clear
The meaning of the myrrh.

Then, trusting God to keep
Her Wonderful One,
Tired Mary fell asleep
Near her little son.

At the end of the night,
All her terrors fled,
Mary stood in fair day-light
Beside Jesus' bed.

Eyes starry after rest
He opened wide and smiled;
The mother lifted to her breast
Her own sweet child.

CHRISTMAS JOY

CHRISTMAS joy! The bells are flinging
Happy music on the air;
Unseen censers, lightly swinging,
Scatter fragrance everywhere.
Something the laughing infant sees
Of circling joy, this day has brought,
A-quiver on the burdened breeze.
We look on him with tender thought,
Remembering how our Lord did rest
A Babe upon a mother's breast.

Christmas joy! The air is thrilling
With a wonderful delight;
Love the fleeting hours is filling
With all pleasure, pure and bright.
This is the children's festal day;
To-day their sun may know no shade;
Who will not smile upon their play?
Surely he smiles who holy made
All childhood for that, undefiled,
He dwelt on earth a holy Child!

Christmas joy! Unto all people
Came good tidings once of yore.
Let the bells from every steeple
Tell the story o'er and o'er!
Who would not be a child to-day,
To let the Christmas gladness in?
Who would not be a child away?
For who would Heaven's kingdom win,

He as a little child must come
Unto a loving Father's home.

Christmas joy! The stream of living
Overflows with effluence wide;
So by taking and by giving
Blessedness is multiplied.
For God all gifts to us hath given,
Each sweetness that his creature finds,
The thrill of life, the thought of Heaven;
And first and best this day reminds
How for supremest gift, indeed,
He gave Himself unto our need.

Christmas joy! Its tide shall never
Find through all eternity
End nor bound. Peace like a river
Broadens to the shoreless sea.
For God all tears shall wipe away:
The aged and the sorrowing
May share the joy of Christmas day,
May hear old words their comfort bring:
Our griefs he bore; to light hath he
Brought life and immortality.

Christmas joy! The bells are ringing,
Tuneful throats their sound prolong;
Almost through the children's singing
We can hear the angels' song.
The tidings which the shepherds heard
Were unto us as unto them,
And for our saving Christ the Lord

Was born that day in Bethlehem.
Hark! 'Tis the heavenly host again,—
Peace upon earth, good will toward men!

COSMOS

Not hazard, but the guiding hand
Of regnant Providence controls
The destinies of motes and souls;
Earth's elements combine and cleave,
Their orbits fixed, their permutations planned
From the young world's primeval eve.

O, what a moment that which saw
Force become power, and matter brought
Under the sovereignty of thought,—
When inchoate star-dust, blindly whirled,
First learned obedience unto cosmic law,
And out of chaos dawned — a world!

Life quickened the insensate heart,
Life, with its leaping pulse of change,
Its linked mutations, seriate, strange;
Each form, as comes its birth-hour ripe,
Grade above grade, in rhythmic counterpart,
Incarnates its ascending type.

Sprang mind, the crowning fruit of time,
The creature made creator, lent —
For earth's command, by Heaven's intent —
Divine volition, centre-stirred,
Dominant thought, and — poet of God's rhyme —
Dowered with his attribute — the word.

From ultimate atom unto man,
So was the world's equation solved,—

So coil on widening coil evolved,
In mystic curves of beauty wrought,
The involutions of creation's plan,
The convolutions of God's thought.

FABLES OF ELD

I

THE old mythologies, they say, are dead,
And borne to bygone Fantasy's pale spheres,
Low laid on conquering Reason's level biers.
Dead as the languages whose souls are wed
With poesy! Cold as the arts that shed
From potent finger-tips, adown the years,
Ideal grace! Mute as the poet-seers,
Whose songs are sung, whose deathless words are said!
O shadowy host, that dwell in purple state
Upon the mount of Beauty,— Phoebe mild,
And Aphrodite, whom the enamored seas
Reluctant yielded, Pallas fair and great,
Wing-sandaled Hermes, and Dionysus wild,—
Ye live instead, if ye but die as these!

II

Surely the beautiful can never die!
Still in the mossy shade of sylvan deeps
The circling dance Pan with the Dryads keeps;
Still from the rock is heard sad Echo's cry,
And Zephyr woos young Flora with a sigh;
Still on the mountain top Endymion sleeps,
And Cynthia kisses; still the Naiad leaps,
And turns her gleaming tresses to the sky;
Still in the sculptured wave Cyrene sits,
And sees from out her casement's lucent bar
Palæmon train his dolphin; still askance
Persephone eyes Hades as she flits;
Still Phœbus reins his coursers, and afar
Swift Iris, passing, tints the cloud's expanse.

III

I think the poets of the infancy ,
Of earth had looked upon the life that thrills
The insensate forests and the immobile hills,
Throbbing in throat of bird and leaf of tree,
Deep glimmering where the hollow surges be,
Smiling in mead, and trembling in the rills,—
The changing, swift, perpetual life that fills
With ebb and flow each quick variety
Of natural form,—had looked until they caught
The pulse of the creative touch that wrought
Life out of chaos, crowning and complete.
Thus, meeting God in nature, soon they thought
Nature was God, and in their blindness brought
Their rude and untaught worship to her feet.

IV

So near in their simplicity they crept,
Those earliest poets, to the inspiring wood,
The subtle melodies of field and flood,
And harmonies of cataracts that leapt;
The earth's mysterious influences swept
Over their souls, in glad receptive mood,
With so resistless power,—'twere sometimes good
Our wilful feet should follow where they stepped.
For we, with truer knowledge, larger sight,
And wider outlook, whose experience
Has grasped the secret things of sea and strand,
May miss, perchance, through fulness of our light,
The faith that owned with childlike reverence
God's handiwork divine, though hid his hand.

V

The world is old, the heart of things is new;
 It changes not, although the seasons may;
 It changes not, although the hills decay;
 In ruin of water-spout and poise of dew,
 It beats responsive still to him who drew
 Order and action out of formless clay.
 A thousand years are as a single day,
 And life is ever living, truth is true.
 The ages pass, the verities abide;
 The ancient energies unswerving act,
 And strike one hour of Nature's tireless youth.
 Woven in the web of myth ran side by side
 Fantastic fiction and primordial fact,
 Ephemeral error and eternal truth.

VI

So much they saw, yet were so little wise
 By vision given, those dreamers of the fair
 Fables of eld! Of life divine were ware,
 Quickening the world's heart, yet with holden eyes
 Missed the Life-giver; starred with deities
 Beheld the verdurous plain and luminous air,
 Yet found not God by seeking anywhere,
 And paid an orphaned Nature sacrifice.
 Let pass the phantoms! Holy ground is earth
 For who will worship, but her holiest place
 Was veiled unto that shadow-haunted band.
 A world conscious of God has a new birth
 Of beauty, flowers into diviner grace,
 Held in the hollow of the Father's hand.

THE ORIOLE

HARK! do you hear that note, sustained and clear?
Come, look into the top of yonder tree!
No, higher — higher yet! There, do you see?
It is the Oriole, that's lighted here
To bring a bit of tropic splendor near,—
A vision of the warmth and brilliancy
Of southern coloring to you and me.
Now he is stirring! There's a gleam of sheer
Translucent flame, and he has flown away.
We welcome, do we not, our timid guest;
Upon our tallest elm, if he will stay,
He and his mate shall hang their hammock nest,
Where the light zephyrs, that forever sway
The pendent leaves, shall rock their babes to rest.

OCTOBER

THE air is sweet and warm, the sky is blue,
The clouds are fleecy, and the fields are green
As early June; only the gaze serene
Of the far southern sun, the golden hue
That tints this drifting leaf, the distant gleam
Of reddened maple, and the breeze just stirred
By eager new-tried wing of forest bird,
Its heart a-flutter with the prescient dream
Of the long journey southward,—hints half-told,
Whisper not spring but Indian fall is here.
’Tis the late afternoon of the tired year,
When, like a wearied housewife, she may fold
Her hands to enjoy the rest and warmth and light,
Before close down the gloom and chill of night.

THE BERMUDAS

SWEET summer isles! The southern zephyrs blow
With odorous gale from balmy summer seas,
And warm lagoons murmur to shores that please;
The sapphire waves turn rose against the glow
Of coral sands, and cocoa palms bend low
O'er white shell cliffs; the sombre cedar trees
Are bright with redbird's wing; the whispering
breeze
Comes sweet from jasmine-scented bowers, where
grow
Tangles of aloe and palmetto. Bowers
Of beauty, breath of scent! In such a spot
The weary heart might find enchanted rest,
As thought-free as the oleander flowers,
Knowing the world is fair, but sad is thought,
And labor irksome — idleness is best.

MOUNT WASHINGTON

FALSELY, Mount Washington, 'twas said of thee
That thou dost stand a hard and soulless stone,
Immutable, gazing like Brahm upon
The world's uplifted eye and bended knee;
For thou art changeful as the summer sea,
And still dost answer Nature's varying tone,
The lights and darks across her features blown,
With quick response and gracious harmony.
Now draped in gloom of cloud, now veiled in mist,
Now wearing like a king right royally
The purple or the ermine, fair to see,
Now by the crimson lips of sunset kissed,
Down the sky's color gamut thou dost range,
And still the same dost seem each day more strange.

O DEAR ONES GONE

O DEAR ones gone, ye yet abide by me ;
Ye share each day what hap of life I meet,
Wonted or strange, making the hope more sweet,
The fear less fearful. In the questioning sea
Or answering wood my heart in underkey
Your speech may know, or in the busy street
Is ware of soundless fall of following feet,
And finds heart-comfort in such company.
So, being gone ye stay, being dead ye speak !
With silent voice of fairer joys ye tell
And fuller life than these I know in part.
Ye do live twice who were for life too meek,—
Once in the bowers where saints celestial dwell,
And once in the rose-circle of my heart.

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